

**Thomas Jefferson to Charles Clay, January 11, 1807,
from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve
Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul
Leicester Ford.**

TO REV. CHARLES CLAY²

2 From a copy courteously furnished by Dr. J. M. Wilson, of Douglas, Wyoming.

Washington, Jan. 11, 07.

Dear Sir, —Yours of Dec. 10, has been duly received, and I thank you for your friendly attention to the offer of lands adjoining me for sale. It is true that I have always wished to purchase a part of what was Murray's tract which would straiten the lines of the Poplar Forest, but I really am not able to make a purchase. I had hoped to keep the expences of my office within the limits of its salary so as apply my private income entirely to the improvement & enlargement of my estate: but I have not been able to do it. Our affairs with Spain, after which you enquire, do not promise the result we wish. Not that war will take place immediately; but they may go off without a settlement, and leave us in constant bickering about indemnification for Spoliations, the navigation of the Mobille, and the Limits of Louisiana.

Burr's enterprise is the most extraordinary since the days of Don Quixot. It is so extravagant that those who know his understanding would not believe it if the proofs admitted doubt. He has meant to place himself on the throne of Montezuma, and extend his empire to the Allegany seizing on N Orleans as the instrument of compulsion for our Western States. I think his undertaking effectually crippled by the activity of Ohio. Whether Kentucky will give him the *coup de grâce* is doubtful; but if he is able to descend the river

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with any means we are sufficiently prepared at New Orleans. I hope however Kentucky will do its duty & finish the matter for the honour of popular govmnt and the discouragement of all arguments for standing armies. Accept my friendly salutations & assurances of great esteem & respect.